

INDEXA



Summer 2002

Issue 58

A non-profit organization for the enhancement of amateur radio, worldwide peace, and friendship
Daily Information Session—14.236 @ 23:30Z

INDEXA President

Murphy G. Ratterree, W4WMQ: Silent Key

In this issue of the INDEXA newsletter, we reflect upon the life of Murphy Gerald Ratterree, W4WMQ.

In his own mind, Murphy identified with his roots as a simple farm boy. His values were the values of the land he grew-up in and loved. He spoke of family, friends, honor, and the green hills, lakes, and valleys of home.

It was in South Carolina that he met Sue, the love of his life, and with her he raised a family.

Throughout the succeeding years, Murphy accomplished many things. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Air Force Reserve. He built a successful career within the Rock Hill Telephone Company. He became a lay minister of the Methodist Church and he was a knowledgeable lay theologian.

Like so many veterans of his day, Murphy loved the outdoors. He loved the self-reliant life of hunting, fishing, and exploring in the wild. He was, as it once was said, a man's man. As time went on, he expanded an interest in amateur radio that began in high school where he enjoyed both radio operation and experimentation.

Like many military veterans, Murphy dreamed of a world where people from different ethnic backgrounds and cultural values could find a way to communicate and put aside their differences. In 1983, his



Murphy G. Ratterree, W4WMQ
Founder and President, INDEXA

desire to promote goodwill among the nations of the world led him and two other amateur operators to found the International DX Association.

In his personal life, Murphy set the highest standards and goals for himself and for his children. He accepted the need to be their role model because he loved them, cared for them, and longed for their success in life. Murphy brought this same energy to INDEXA, setting the highest possible goals and standards

and encouraging everyone involved to strive and work for the ideals of this international organization. Murphy loved INDEXA!

In every area of his life, Murphy was a leader. He inspired others to always do their best. He valued loyalty, honesty, truth and justice, and in an imperfect world he often had to deal with others who did not share these values. He always

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kept his sense of humor, dry as it was, and while often needing to be stern, firm, and unyielding, he strove always to be fair. Murph lived his life as a man who valued family, friends, country, duty, and honor. He is missed.

Following are excerpts from the letters of some of his amateur radio colleagues, fellow DXers, and friends:

"...I am very sorry to lose my good friend, Murph. We were in contact for more than 20 years and he was a great gentleman. His outstanding work as president for INDEXA was on a high level. I will miss him very much."

—Franz Langner, DJ9ZB
INDEXA Director

"I am so sorry to hear about Murph's passing.... I hope Murph... {is} at peace. If there is anything I can do, let me know."

—Richard Grant, W9RG
INDEXA Director

"I lament deeply the death of Mr. Murphy Ratterree, W4WMQ. My condolences for all the community of INDEXA and specially for {his} family."

—Jesús Huerta, EA1KX

"Amateur Radio has lost one of the great gentleman of the hobby and I will miss him very much."

—Bruce Butler, W6OSP
Treasurer, NCDXF

"It is with deep regret that we learn of Murf's passing. He will be missed so much by the DX world. We have indeed lost a dear friend. And those of us who go on DXpeditions all have a very special place in our hearts for Murf. You will be greatly missed my friend!"

—Anthony (Tony) DePrato, WA4JQS

"During his life, Murph was a dear and special family friend! He rejoiced with us in the good times; he wept with us in the bad.

"Professionally, I respected Murphy as a mentor because he lived by the courage of his convictions. As a God-fearing man, he knew right from wrong.

He did not compartmentalize his values and convictions; rather, he applied his values and convictions to all aspects of his life including amateur radio and most specifically, INDEXA.

"Murphy was not impressed by image, social prestige, or fortune. He judged each person on the basis of his/her own merits. For this, and for so much more, my husband, Ken, N7SQU, and I will miss him. We lost a good and loyal friend. Yet, we rejoice because we know that one day we will meet again in the glory of eternity!"

"Murphy G. Ratterree, you will never be forgotten!"

—Judy Roush, AA7UC
INDEXA

"Words can never express the depth of feeling we have when we experience a very real loss. The pain and loneliness increases with the closeness of the person we lose.

"The loss of my friend Murphy grieves me greatly. Yet, I know this loss is far more deeply felt by Murphy's family and other closer friends.

"Murph and I had much in common. Over the years, we talked about our love of family, friends, country, and the Word of God. I miss him. Yet, I know death is not the end; it is a new beginning. The acorn falls to earth and from its demise a mighty oak arises. So it is with us. Murph lives in a new body, more glorious than we can imagine, and we indeed shall meet again.

"His memory is eternal and, by God's grace, eternity belongs to him."

—Fr. Ken Roush, N7SQU
Member, INDEXA

"Murphy Ratterree was an inspiration, a leader and a friend.... His endless efforts with the INDEXA group will be sorely missed.... Last and extremely significant is that Murphy had a mate that backed him, put up with lots of hamming, ham radio gear and the tall towers that go with a super station. All of us should give Sue a big vote of appreciation."

—Royce Goodwin, WA4AFE
Former INDEXA Staff Member

"Murph...drafted me to join the staff. We talked for at least an hour. He was very specific in the goals, etc., and ideals of INDEXA.... He was very specific about the conduct of the staff. He was running a very tight ship and very little lee-way. I'm happy to be on staff and thanks to Mr. Murph for his confidence."

—Terry Oldham, KH6MT/W4
INDEXA Staff Member

"I am deeply saddened to hear this news. Murphy has been a good friend and one of the most helpful people that I had the pleasure of dealing with. My INDEXA life membership was because of him. Please pass my condolences on to his family."

—Bill Horner, VK4FW

"I am saddened by the loss of a wonderful friend and am certain, the Lord has him by the hand."

—Verne, W8BLA
INDEXA Vice-Direc

"We (Josep and I) are really very sad about the bad news. We feel sorrow for the sad moments. Of course, we'll pray for Murphy and all his family. Be strong in these moments."

—Nuria, EA3WL & Josep, EA3BT

"It is sad to report that Murphy Ratterree, W4WMQ, the founder and first president of INDEXA, became a "Silent Key" on September 9th. OPDX and its readers would like to send out our deepest sympathy to his family and friends."

—Tedd Mirgliotta, KB8NW,
Ohio/Penn DX Bulletin

"Yes, it is a sad time for INDEXA with the passing of Murph...That's why on the night of Murph's death, I took it upon myself to continue with the Session as Murph would have wanted it."

—Don, KB6KTV
INDEXA Staff Member

"We're sorry to learn that Murph is no longer with us. Our condolences."

—Rick Lindquist, N1
Senior News Editor
American Radio Relay League

Memories of Murphy Gerald Ratterree

by William L. Jennings, W4UNP, Secretary-Treasurer, INDEXA

"{I am writing to} express the condolence of the complete Myanmar DXpedition members after receiving this bad news. It will be a big loss for all of us that Murphy passed away and I will keep forever in my mind how he decided to support us. {He was} an upright man with quick decisions, which was very impressive for me...."

—Frank Rosenkranz, DL4KQ

"Murphy is a Silent Key and I will never hear his voice again or hear his point of view of INDEXA matters or life in general. I learned to know Murphy and his demand for high ethics of running The International DX Association, Inc. I will miss him!"

—Arnie Kristoffersen, LA8CJ
Director, INDEXA

"Murph, I always enjoyed our phone chats, especially those about southern cooking. There are not many folks left that consider a glass of cornbread and buttermilk to be dessert! You worked extremely hard while on this earth and among your accomplishments is an organization that affects amateur radio operators around the globe, fosters international friendship, and is considered one of the leading DX support associations in the world. Its name is INDEXA and you launched it on September 30, 1983. You will be missed, my friend."

—Bill Pickard, WA5PAE
INDEXA Vice-President



Additional friends who have expressed their condolences:

Doug, WQ7B, INDEXA Staff

Al, NS6B, INDEXA Staff

Steve, W7WK, INDEXA Staff

Keith, W7KEU, INDEXA Staff

Myrt Willbanks, XYL of N5BLK

Bernie McClenny, W3UR, *The Daily DX*

John, W2NQ

Tim Durkin, K6TİM

A short while after Murph started his job as President of INDEXA he requested that I help INDEXA by doing the job of Treasurer. A little later on INDEXA also needed help in the Secretary's area, so I became Secretary-Treasurer to help INDEXA even more. Working alongside Murph in INDEXA helped make us closer friends than we were before INDEXA came into being.

My earliest memories of Murph go back to the 1940s. Murph came to visit his grandparent's home, which was about a mile from my home. I was amazed that he was up to his elbows repairing an old car that was his very own. He was two years younger and no one I knew that was our age owned a car or knew how to drive and fix one. Recently, I asked him about that old car and he told me his father, grandfather or uncle, I don't remember which, had modified it for dirt track racing. After they were through using it for racing they gave it to Murph so he could learn to drive and fix a car. Murph had it awhile, then sold it to someone who didn't understand how the racing modifications made it difficult to drive on regular highways. The new owner learned the hard way by landing in a gully during his drive home!

During high school Murph was two years behind me due to our age difference. We had the good fortune of having Mr. Joe D. Gault as a science teacher at our school. Mr. Gault, an amateur radio operator, organized a radio club in our school with its main purpose being the preparation of club members for amateur radio license tests. Murph and I were in this radio club, though at different times, and passed our Novice Class license test thanks to the efforts of Mr. Gault.

After high school both Murph and I were sought out by the local telephone company and offered jobs based on our knowledge of electronics as evidenced by our amateur radio licenses. We had successful careers there and both of us retired at the end of 1998.

While Murph and I were busy working and raising our families, my ham radio operation was limited to occasional stateside contacts on 40 and 80 meters. In 1979, I got a beam up and started working DX on ten meters. I discovered that Murph had already been into DX a good while and had worked most of the countries. I never caught up with him on countries worked but tried my best! Murph called me many times on the phone to get on the air to work a new one. I did the same for him. I was trying to call him recently to let him know that North Korea was on 15 meter SSB but received a busy signal on his number. This was because he was calling me at the same time to alert me to the new one! I am very glad he worked North Korea that day and got his QSL card. I'm still trying to break the pile-ups on that one. After confirming North Korea, Murph had only Scarborough Reef left to have all DXCC entities and get back to number one Honor Roll again.

Murph's main interest was to love and care for his family. In addition to INDEXA and amateur radio, he had many other hobbies. Some of them were hunting, fishing, gun collecting, photography, furniture making, and gardening.

If he were still with us he would say of this story: "Don't be bragging about Murph, it's INDEXA that has done all the good things!"

Memorial Contributions

The Ratterree family requests that memorial contributions be made to:

The American Cancer Society
500 E. Morehead Street, Suite 211
Charlotte, NC 28202
USA

A Tribute to W4WMQ

by Haney Howell, K2XN

Longtime INDEXA President, Murphy Ratterree, became a Silent Key on September 9, 2002. Ratterree is survived by his wife, daughter and son, all of Rock Hill, South Carolina.

An Honor Roll member for many years, Ratterree was responsible for leading INDEXA through several changes. For many years, the organization shipped transceivers, amplifiers and antennas to help hams in many countries get on the air. This work reached a peak before the fall of the Soviet Union and the increased availability of equip-

ment overseas.

INDEXA actively supported numerous DXpeditions through the years, and gave encouragement and on-air support to many operations.

Under Ratterree's leadership, the daily INDEXA Information Session on 14.236 remained the core of the organization's efforts. He insisted on top rate performance from the INDEXA staff members, and made it clear that there were no "net controllers," just

active DXers who wanted to help others find QSL routes and obtain their cards. He gave thousands of hours of his time to the organization, while maintaining his presence on the bands.

First licensed nearly fifty years ago, Ratterree was the personification of what ham radio is all about. He gave of his time and energy to further the hobby, especially DX. He will be missed by friends and those who were helped by INDEXA worldwide. He was a great ham and human being.

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Bill Jennings, W4UNP

Secretary-Treasurer, INDEXA

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